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ALPHABET SOUP

FQPA, FIFRA, 2(ee), 24(c), S18, 25(b), TRAC, SAP, PDP, ETC.

An EPA Region 4 Pesticide's information update to inform regulators, organizations, and the interested public about the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA), sustainable agriculture projects, and FIFRA registration actions and policy.
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REX LIVINGSTON, MISSISSIPPI FARMER, WINS PESTICIDE STEWARDSHIP AWARD

Mr. Rex Livingston was nominated by the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce for the Region 4 Pesticide Stewardship Award for his efforts in developing and sustaining a highly successful pesticide container recycling program.

According to Dr. Jimmy Bonner, Water Quality Coordinator for Mississippi State University Extension Service, "Since 1989, under Mr. Livingston's leadership, the Mississippi Pesticide Container Recycling Program has recycled more than four million pounds of pesticide containers. Mr. Livingston played vital roles in every aspect of this program, from the pilot effort to all phases of planning, development and administration. As a direct result of his efforts, Mississippi became the national leader in pesticide container recycling, with more than 40 counties participating. While overseeing a program which recycles an average of more than 500,000 pounds of containers each year, Mr. Livingston performs an invaluable service to farmers and the environment."

Micky Sims, Executive Secretary for the Agricultural Aviation Board of Mississippi says, "I have never seen any person more excited or enthused over a program. Being the first container recycling program in the nation, we were faced with many trials and setbacks but through Rex's sincere dedication and relentless hard work the program was and is a success."

Bryan Tolar, former Coordinator of the GA Pesticide Container Recycling Program and currently with the Georgia Agribusiness Council says, "In the early 90's the Agricultural Container Research Council (ARC) had the vision of a national program for recycling empty, clean, pesticide containers. But with vision you need action to generate results - Rex Livingston generated results. Mississippi set the pace while the other states watched and learned from their example. Georgia, along with so many other states, certainly learned from their accomplishments, thus showing all state program coordinators the real potential of this recycling program in the region. Rex Livingston is a huge force in Mississippi's success - a success that encourages so many of the other states to push forward and expand program areas."

Many of the early state pesticide container recycling program efforts were started with funds from EPA, Region 4. This is the first year for the Region 4 Pesticide Stewardship Award which is a program spearheaded by the EPA Region 4 Pesticide Stewardship Committee. The Committee is made up of representatives from EPA, State pesticide control officials, the Cooperative Extension Service, industry, farmers, and farm organizations.

Nominations for the award are made by the eight Region 4 State pesticide control officials on the Committee. The purpose of the award is to recognize those who are going the extra mile in protecting the environment through development and implementation of pesticide stewardship programs.

The winner and nominees are each being recognized for their achievements in their respective states.

Florida, Georgia, North Carolina & Tennessee Nominees are Recognized with Certificates of Merit for Pesticide Stewardship Actions

Joe Hall of Suwannee Farms in O'Brien Florida was recognized for working with state and federal agencies to collect samples on his property to show what happens to certain pesticides once they are applied to crops. This data helped Florida develop plans to better manage pesticides and keep them out of groundwater.

Rick Reed and the Coffee County Conservation Alliance in Douglas , Georgia were recognized for conservation tillage practices expanding from 200 acres to 30,000 acres. Conservation tillage protects the soil by reducing soil erosion.

Jill Sidebottom of North Carolina State University was recognized for the development and implementation of an integrated pest management (IPM) program for North Carolina Christmas tree growers. This program resulted in significantly reduced use of pesticides and fertilizer.

Ronnie Osteen of the Lincoln Farmers Cooperative in Fayetteville, Tennessee was recognized for the development of a model site facility for dry bulk fertilizer and blending at the Cooperative's main office. The facility utilizes state-of-the-art environmental safeguards.

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PRESERVING PARADISE

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Editor's note: The following article written by Al Fava is reprinted with permission from the August 1999 *Cotton Grower* magazine. It describes the Mississippi Delta USDA MSEA project. Staff from EPA Region 4 had the opportunity to view the project in August while visiting farmers and researchers in the Mississippi Delta. The opinions expressed in this article reflect those of the author. Data discussed has not been formally reviewed by EPA.

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There was a soybean field behind our home in Greenville, MS. In the middle of the bean field was a cypress brake that retained water year-round. There was a small clump of trees between our house and the brake that hid an old treehouse that someone had built years ago.

For a Delta boy, this was paradise! I fished in the cypress brake, played cowboys and Indians in the field with my friends and napped in the treehouse. Beyond the brake, it seemed, there was a never-ending world of ghostly backlands worth exploring.

Slowly, the bean field and cypress brake disappeared to make way for human progress. Eventually, my treehouse was replaced by someone's dream home.

Recently I read about a special USDA project in the Mississippi Delta aimed at preserving natural habitats. The 5-year, multimillion-dollar Mississippi Delta Management Systems Evaluation Area (MSEA) comprises about 7,320 acres of farmland around three lakes: Thighman, Beasley and Deep Hollow in Sunflower and Leflore counties. The project's goal is to measure farm run-off and its effect on groundwater and evaluate how environmentally-friendly farming practices can benefit oxbow lakes (oxbow lakes form when a meandering river shifts to a new, straight channel, leaving a crescent-shaped section of the old channel filled with water).

Results show that practices like cover crops planted in watersheds protect groundwater. Data from the 7,320-acre MSEA shows groundwater contamination by farm chemicals is not a problem.

USDA-ARS scientists drilled about 100 wells at depths of five, 10 and 15 feet in the watersheds around the three lakes. They checked for 18 different farm chemicals. In three years, only five of 600 well samples showed pesticide residue. Even then, levels were within limits for drinking water.

Delta grower Floyd Anderson's cropland is located along Thighman Lake, and is part of the MSEA project. He says the project has helped restore the unfairly tarnished reputation of producers.

"The public never sees all that I do to protect the land," says Anderson. "Why would I make 10 or 12 tilling trips across a field and erode my soil—and pay $6 an acre each time to do it—when three or four trips will do?"

Besides monitoring groundwater, researchers involved in this project are also tracking effects of experimental production practices and crop rotations on weeds, beneficial soil and water microbes, soil organic matter and soil nutrients.

It's a bit comforting to know that at least some areas of Delta paradise will be preserved.

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GAIA ORGANIC FARM LOCATED IN DOWNTOWN ATLANTA

Gaia Garden produces abundant organic vegetables for its co-op members on its 4 acres of land in the heart of downtown Atlanta in the Eastlake Community. Each week members receive a "Gifts from the Garden" update by email describing what will be in their shopping bags.

Gaia Gardens is in a unique setting surrounded by large trees, both hardwood and pine, with a small pond at one edge. Ryan Cohen, the full-time manager of the garden, has big plans for Gaia. He is currently working hard to build up the soil by use of multiple cover crops. Buckwheat is a favorite cover crop. Buckwheat pulls and stores phosphate. Vegetables grown in Gaia are certified organic.

Gaia Garden is also special because it is part of a nonprofit co-housing community where members actually own the land in common. East Lake Commons (ELC) will have 67 townhouses when completed, a common house for group meals and other activities, common areas for walking dogs and visiting neighbors, a playground for children. ELC promotes sustainable living through such practices as organic gardening, sharing of tools, environmentally friendly building designs, energy conservation and resource preservation. ELC is one of only two co-housing communities in Georgia. Nationally, co-housing is becoming increasingly more popular as an alternative to traditional housing developments.

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What is IPM?

According to EPA, IPM is the coordinated use of pest and environmental information with available pest control methods to prevent unacceptable levels of pest damage by the most economical means, and with the least possible hazard to people, property and the environment.

To learn more about EPA and IPM visit our web site at:

www.epa.gov/opp00001/food/ipmfs.htm

Georgia Station Research & Education Garden Has Open House

EPA staff were VIP guests at the Georgia Station Research & Education Garden (GSREG) open house held on September 23, 1999.
The GSREG located at the Griffin Experiment Station is strategically located to serve the South's largest metropolitan area, Atlanta, Georgia. Some 40 miles away, the Garden serves as a demonstration and research location for a number of organizations.

The Garden was the brainchild of Dr. Joyce Latimer who has consistently provided vision and tremendous personal energy to its development.

The local community has been instrumental in supporting the Garden by raising funds for its infrastructure. The Dogwood Garden Club and the Federated Garden Clubs of Griffin and Spalding County, along with a donation by Mrs. Deen Day Smith, paid for the installation of over 13,000 square feet of pathways in the Garden.

Plans are in place to broadcast from the Garden the popular local television show, "The Georgia Gardener" a program of Georgia Public Television and hosted by Walter Reeves.

Visitors of the Garden saw a lovely site with numerous plantings of flowers and shrubs attractive to butterflies—lots of yellow and purple. And, beneficial insects are always encouraged to visit the Garden and dine on other undesirable insects.

During the open house, EPA staff had an opportunity to view ongoing research and to discuss future research and demonstration activities planned for the Garden. A major project has recently been funded by EPA under a Section 319 (H) Nonpoint Source Implementation Grant which will benefit Georgia homeowners who maintain their own landscapes. A state education program is to be developed based on best management practices (BMPs) tested and demonstrated at the GSREG. A BMP manual will be developed and distributed to each county extension office in Georgia.

Proper use of BMPs by homeowners could reduce pollution from pesticides and fertilizers which contaminate area rivers. Urban use of pesticides may actually result in higher pesticide levels in water than agricultural uses of pesticides, according to a study conducted by the U. S. Geological Survey from March 1993 through April 1994 in the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint and Ocumulgee River basins.

In attendance at the Open House were a number of UGA researchers and administrators, among them being Dr. Gerald F. Arkin, Assistant Dean and, Dr. Gale A. Buchanan, Dean and Director, College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences.

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MS DELTA FARMERS PROTECT WATER AND WILDLIFE

Seymour Johnson, a catfish, cotton and soybean farmer, in the Mississippi Delta has turned from hunter to bird watcher. American white pelicans and double-crested commorants are birds which plague the catfish industry, but all other species are welcome on Mr. Johnson's catfish operation. The catfish industry has brought many shore birds inland for bird watchers. Mr. Johnson admits, "they are pretty to look at." Delta farmers are pleased to point out the diversity of shore birds which visit the catfish ponds such as the greater yellowlegs, black-necked stilts, and semipalmated sandpipers. Catfish farmers encourage a diversity of wildlife by providing habitat for many species.

An environmental problem that catfish farmers are trying to address is the overflow and drainage from catfish ponds which contain large amounts of organic waste. Many catfish farmers including Mr. Johnson have taken measures to prevent this. Catch basins, overfall pipes, grass waterways, sedimentation reservoirs, and bioremediation ponds have been implemented to reduce organic effluent. Another technique used by the catfish industry is massive earth moving to control the flow of water for maximum use and efficiency. Land forming can help create tail waste recovery systems which aid in water use and reduce effluent

Tail water recovery has also been implemented on row crop systems in the Mississippi Delta. Terry Murrel has a very impressive system involving an enhanced natural slough. The slough has been developed into a large reservoir. His system is truly closed.
In addition to reducing water use, Delta farmers are taking steps to improve water quality by planting grass filter strips on the edges of fields. These filter prevent erosion, trap suspended sediments, and provide a remedial site for the degradation of pesticides and fertilizers.

Many of these proactive conservation practices such as earth moving and tailwater recovery systems are very costly and in this lies impediments for many Delta farmers. However, other BMP's are fairly "cheap" to implement such as grass filter strips. But, for the many who have implemented these BMPs environmental benefits abound.
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Mountain Partners in Agriculture Preserve Land & Livelihood in Western North Carolina

Mountain Partners in Agriculture (MPIA) established in 1995 through support from Partners in Agriculture has developed into an effective community-based action-oriented diverse coalition of farmers, community leaders, local organizations, business enterprises, federal, state, and local governmental agencies, environmental groups, public interest organizations and rural land owners.

MPIA has three goals: (1) conserve, restore, and sustain community farms, (2) develop alternative high-value crops, value-added commodities, and implement sustainable agricultural systems, and (3) support, develop and implement marketing and education programs.

Through a variety of grant programs MPIA has been able to further its goals. MPIA received an EPA Sustainable Development Challenge Grant in 1999. Other grant funds have been provided by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation.

MPIA has already provided support to three conventional farming operations which are moving toward more sustainable and organic production systems. These farmers will in turn provide models and serve as mentors for others to make the transition.

To ensure that desired practices are institutionalized MPIA has worked with the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service and the Carolina Farm Stewardship Association to provide the *Sustainable Mountain Farming Program* at the Madison Campus of Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College where classes will be taught beginning in the Fall of 1999 and continuing through March 2,000.

During a recent visit by EPA Region 4, staff met with two of the organic farmers who participate in the project. The farmers expressed their appreciation for EPA's support and attention to the efforts of organic growers. One of the many challenges for organic farmers was said to be successful marketing of their produce. Organic farmers need connections with communities likely to buy their products.

To learn more about this project contact Gary F. Gumz, the Project Coordinator by email at:
ggumz@madison.main.nc.us

TIDBITS

XERISCAPE (Pronounced Zera-scape) is a term coined in Colorado in 1981 that describes a seven-step approach to outdoor water conservation in the landscape. These include proper planning and design, soil analysis, appropriate plant selection, practical turf areas, efficient irrigation, use of mulches and appropriate Maintenance.

To learn more about Xeriscape and ways you can save water, time and money in the outdoor landscape, the Georgia Water Wise Council has a 40-page booklet entitled "Xeriscape: A Guide to Developing a Water Wise Landscape." To obtain a copy, send a check for $3.95 to the Georgia Water Wise Council, 1033 Franklin Rd., Suite 9-187, Marietta, GA 30067-8004

(From "You Can Have Twice the Landscape for Half the Water." Prepared by Gary L. Wade, University of Georgia)

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OTHER EPA REGIONS

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Barbara Naess, Agricultural Initiative Coordinator for Region 5, is leaving her position to spend more time with her children (Good for you Barbara). She will be missed. Barbara took off running and put together some great FQPA updates. I think we should give Barbara a "Boomerang" farewell party which means we hope she will come back as soon as she can. Margaret Jones is assuming Barbara's responsibilities.

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EPA HEADQUARTERS:

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Existing Stocks of Methyl Parathion cannot be used after December 31, 1999

On October 27, 1999, EPA published a Federal Register notice announcing the receipt of voluntary cancellation requests from registrants of methyl parathion products affected by the August 2, 1999, agreement between EPA and the registrants. Effective October 27, 1999, any distribution, sale, or use of methyl parathion products will only be permitted if consistent with the terms of the cancellation order set out in the Federal Register (Vol. 64, No. 207, Pages 57877-57881). Existing stocks of the canceled products may be sold until December 1, 1999, and used until December 31, 1999. Existing registrations of methyl parathion products are being replaced by new registrations without the uses that are being canceled. The Federal Register notice is available on EPA's web site at: **http://www.epa.gov/fedrgstr.**

According to the terms of the voluntary agreement, dealers, retailers and users in possession of existing stocks of canceled methyl parathion products in unopened and full containers which cannot be sold by December 1, 1999, or used by December 31, 1999, may return the product prior to January 1, 2001 for replacement labels, replacement product of equal value or full credit. Users should contact their dealer for specific instructions about relabeling and return.

Any product applied during the 2000 treatment season can only be used on the crops appearing on the replacement label. Users in possession of partially filled containers not used by December 31, 1999, for which they have no use, should make arrangements for disposal of the product through state pesticide disposal programs, if available.

Canceled Uses of Methyl Parathion:

Food/Feed Uses: Apples, artichokes, birdsfoot trefoil, broccoli, brussels sprouts, carrots, cauliflower, celery, cherries, clover, collards, filberts, garden beets, grapes, kale, kohlrabi, lettuce, mustard greens, nectarines, peaches, pears, plums, rutabagas, sorghum, spinach, succulent beans, succulent peas, tomatoes, turnips, and vetch.

Non-Food Uses To Be Canceled :

Christmas trees, chrysanthemums, daisies, field grown ornamentals, flowering plants, forest, grasses grown for seed, guayule, jojoba, marigolds, any mosquito larvicide use, nursery stock, non-agricultural land, roadside areas and wasteland.

Methyl Parathion Uses To Be Maintained:

Alfalfa, almonds, barley, cabbage, corn, cotton, dried beans, dried peas, grass (including rangeland and pastures), hops, lentils, oats, onions, pecans, rape seed (canola), rice, rye, soybeans, sugar beets, sunflower, sweet potatoes, walnuts, wheat, white potatoes.

Note: EC formulations only for alfalfa, cabbage, pecans, rape seed, rye, sugar beets, sunflower.

Microencapsulated formulations only for almonds, lentils, sweet potatoes, walnuts.

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SCIENCE POLICY ISSUE PAPERS STILL OPEN FOR COMMENT

If you are losing track (no pun intended) of which science policy issues papers are still open for comment please visit the TRAC web site for a great summary list at: **http://www.epa.gov/oppfead1/trac/science/**

A number of important Science Policy Issue Papers remain to be published in the *Federal Register*. If you would like to comment on any of them, plan ahead. They are:

Guidance for Performing Aggregate Exposure and Risk Assessment (November 10, 1999)

Cumulative Risk Assessment Guidance (January 2000)

Quantitative Assessment of Uses of Concern for Drinking Water Expected (December 1999)

Factoring Drinking Water Treatment into Drinking Water Assessment for Pesticides
(Expected February 2000)

Interim Early Assessment Policy for Organophosphate Pesticides
(To be determined)

Registration Notes

On October 6 and 27, 1999, EPA's Office of Pesticide Programs published a Federal Register notice announcing the availability of the preliminary human health risk assessment and related documents for the organophosphate pesticides chlopyrifos methyl and chlorpyrifos, respectively. This begins a 60-day comment period on each chemical.

The Federal Register notices are available on each chemical on the Internet at:

http://www.epa.gov/fedrgstr/

The risk assessment documents are available at:

http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/op/

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OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

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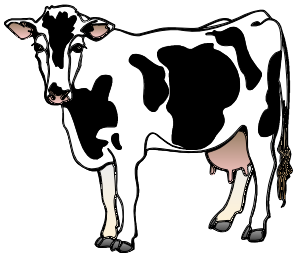
The 9th annual Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group (SSAWG) Annual Conference & Trade Show is scheduled for January 21-23, 2000, at Jekyll Island.

This is an opportunity for all of us interested in learning more about sustainable agriculture to network with others and learn about production and marketing techniques. The SSAWG is a network of 50 organizations in the 14 Southern states working to help family farming be more economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable.



A Farm Tour of Coffee County is included. The Coffee County Alliance was recently recognized by EPA for their conservation tillage practices (see article on page two of this edition about Pesticide Stewardship Awards).

To obtain more information about the conference call (800) 841-6586 or visit the web at **www.jekyllisland.com**

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YOUR COMMENTS

Your editor took a lot of good natured ribbing for having her picture on the front cover of the August edition of "Alphabet Soup." She took it in good spirits and interpreted the comments to mean that you are at least looking at the pictures!

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COMMENTS BY THE AUTHOR

To view an electronic version of "Alphabet Soup" visit the Region 4 web site at:
http://www.epa.gov/region4/air/pesticides/newslett.htm

If readers, have comments or suggestions for this newsletter they would be gratefully received.

To submit comments or information for *Alphabet Soup* please contact:

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